

Artists asked to design Mt. Rushmore coin

By Roger Boye

Uncle Sam will invite several artists to submit designs for coins to honor the 50th anniversary of the Mount Rushmore National Memorial in South Dakota.

Legislation signed by President Bush on July 16 authorizes the U.S. Mint to produce up to 5.5 million 1991-dated coins, with some of the profits from sales to be used for improvements to the memorial. A coin sellout would raise \$18.75 million for Mount Rushmore, which features the busts of four presidents carved into stone.

Officials expect to select the winning designs by early fall, with coin production slated to begin by year's end. Coin types are a \$5 gold piece, silver dollar and copper-nickel half dollar.

Mount Rushmore will be the Treasury's eighth commemorative coin program in 10 years. The U.S. Mint has used a similar invited design competition for

some of the other programs.

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The U.S. Senate once again has approved legislation calling for new designs on circulating coins, but the bill still languishes in a House subcommittee.

Since 1988, the Senate has approved coinage redesign several times, the most recent on June 27 when senators attached the bill to an unrelated piece of legislation that passed on a near unanimous vote. But as of July 19, the House Subcommittee on Consumer Affairs and Coinage still had not scheduled a meeting to consider the matter.

Under the legislation, Treasury officials would place new designs on the tails sides of all five circulating coins, cent thru half dollar. The bill also recommends that Uncle Sam improve heads-side designs.

More than half of the House members are co-sponsoring the legislation. However, Rep. Frank Annunzio (D-Ill.), former chair-

man of the House subcommittee, has opposed coinage redesign, insisting that most Americans prefer the status quo.

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Dozens of price changes are included in the just-released 1991 edition of the so-called "Red Book," coin collecting's most popular reference that lists retail values for U.S. coinage.

Many rarities in the highest condition categories went up in value during the past year, while some of the common dates worn from use went down.

The suggested retail price of the 1991 (44th) edition of "A Guide Book of United States Coins" by R. S. Yeoman also went up by \$1, to \$8.95.

Meanwhile, Krause Publications has issued the 17th edition of "Standard Catalog of World Coins," the most widely used guidebook on world coinage.

To order, send \$39.45 to Krause Publications Inc., 700 E. State St., Iola, Wis. 54990.